



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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House and Senate Republicans Announce First Steps for '06

Leaders pledge to finish the first four agenda items before the end of January

Lansing - Legislative Republicans unveiled their first four agenda items for 2006 this morning, citing the need for immediate action to stimulate the economy and protect taxpayer interests. The agenda items cover tax cuts, regulatory reform and fiscal responsibility and are on track to be sent to the governor before the end of January.

"The Speaker and I completely agree that helping Michigan's economy recover must be our first order of business," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "This is the year to address small businesses and the vital role they play in Michigan's economy."

The first four agenda items scheduled to move through the House and Senate are:

1. Reducing taxes for small businesses by lowering the alternative rate they pay on the Single Business Tax - a modest slice of the budget could cut taxes in half for more than 30,000 Michigan job providers.
2. Placing state revenue left over from 2005 in the state's Rainy Day Fund - money that can only be spent once and, therefore, should be tucked away until all priorities are examined and the money can be spent wisely.
3. Prohibiting onerous ergonomic standards for businesses - unreasonable standards above and beyond what the federal government and other states are doing, thereby making Michigan a less-attractive state in which to do business. Congress overturned such standards at the federal level in 2001 and voters in the state of Washington repealed their state's standards in 2003.
4. Providing businesses with assistance in dealing with the state Treasury bureaucracy - a bureaucracy business owners often complain about because of its size and inefficiency.

"In order to join the national recovery which has long taken hold in other states, Michigan must become a less costly, more business-friendly state for job providers," said House Speaker Craig DeRoche, R-Novi. "We must continue to reform our tax and regulatory environment in Michigan to position ourselves as a beacon for entrepreneurs and new investment."

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